

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor element, comprising a nitride semiconductor layer, an electrode connected to said nitride semiconductor layer, and an insulating film covering at least part of said electrode,

wherein the electrode comprises:

a first metal film including silver or a silver alloy and in contact with the nitride semiconductor layer; and

a second metal film completely covering the first metal film,

and wherein the first metal film is formed from a multilayer film including a film comprising silver or a silver alloy, and a metal film that inhibits a reaction with silver and is disposed over the silver or silver alloy, and

the insulating film comprises a nitride film,

wherein the metal film disposed over the silver or silver alloy film constituting the first metal film is formed such that the thickness of a portion disposed on a side face of the silver or silver alloy film is less than the thickness of the portion disposed over the silver or silver alloy film,

and

wherein the second metal film is formed such that the portions disposed on sides of the first metal are thicker than the portion disposed above said first metal.

2. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor element, comprising a nitride semiconductor layer, an electrode connected to said nitride semiconductor layer, and an insulating film covering at least part of said electrode,

wherein the electrode comprises:

a first metal film including silver or a silver alloy and in contact with the nitride semiconductor layer; and

a second metal film formed so as to prevent the silver from moving across the surface of the nitride semiconductor layer, and

the insulating film comprises a nitride film,

wherein the metal film disposed over the silver or silver alloy film constituting the first metal film is formed such that the thickness of a portion disposed on a side face of the silver or silver alloy film is less than the thickness of the portion disposed over the silver or silver alloy film,
and

wherein the second metal film is formed such that the portions disposed on sides of the first metal are thicker than the portion disposed above said first metal.

3. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1,
wherein the nitride film is formed from either silicon nitride or silicon oxynitride.

4. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1,
wherein the first metal film is a single crystal at least at the interface with the nitride semiconductor layer.

5. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1, wherein the first metal film includes a film comprising silver or a silver alloy, and a nickel film disposed in a partial area between said silver film and the nitride semiconductor layer.

6. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1, wherein the second metal film ~~is comprising~~ comprises a metal that inhibits a reaction with silver at least in the region in contact with the first metal film.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1, wherein the second metal film comprises a metal selected from the group consisting of nickel (Ni), ruthenium (Ru), osmium (Os), iridium (Ir), titanium (Ti), vanadium (V), niobium (Nb), tantalum (Ta), cobalt (Co), iron (Fe), chromium (Cr), and tungsten (W) and disposed at least in the region in contact with the first metal film.

9. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 6, wherein at least the region of the second metal film that is in contact with the first metal film is formed from nickel.

10. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1, wherein the nitride semiconductor layer comprises a nitride semiconductor layer of a first conduction type, a light emitting layer, and a nitride semiconductor layer of a second conduction type that is different from that of the nitride semiconductor layer of the first conduction type, in that order, and an electrode connected to the nitride semiconductor layer is a second electrode connected to the semiconductor layer of the second conduction type.

11. (Original) The semiconductor element according to Claim 10, wherein the nitride semiconductor layer of the first conduction type is an n-type semiconductor layer, and the nitride semiconductor layer of the second conduction type is a p-type semiconductor layer.

12. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 2, wherein the nitride film is formed from either silicon nitride or silicon oxynitride.

13. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 2, wherein the first metal film is a single crystal at least at the interface with the nitride semiconductor layer.

14. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 2, wherein the first metal film includes a film comprising silver or a silver alloy, and a nickel film disposed in a partial area between the silver or silver alloy film and the nitride semiconductor layer.

15. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor element according to Claim 2, wherein the second metal film ~~is comprising~~ comprises a metal that inhibits a reaction with silver at least in the region in contact with the first metal film.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 2, wherein the second metal film comprises a metal selected from the group consisting of nickel (Ni), ruthenium (Ru), osmium (Os), iridium (Ir), titanium (Ti), vanadium (V), niobium (Nb), tantalum (Ta), cobalt (Co), iron (Fe), chromium (Cr), and tungsten (W) and disposed at least in the region in contact with the first metal film.

18. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 15, wherein at least the region of the second metal film that is in contact with the first metal film is formed from nickel.

19. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 2, wherein the nitride semiconductor layer comprises a nitride semiconductor layer of a first conduction type, a light emitting layer, and a nitride semiconductor layer of a second conduction type that is different from that of the nitride semiconductor layer of the first conduction type, in that order, and an electrode connected to the nitride semiconductor layer is a second electrode connected to the semiconductor layer of the second conduction type.

20. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 19, wherein the nitride semiconductor layer of the first conduction type is an n-type semiconductor layer, and the nitride semiconductor layer of the second conduction type is a p-type semiconductor layer.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1, wherein a nickel film is disposed in a partial area between the silver or silver alloy film constituting the first metal film and the nitride semiconductor layer.

23. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1, wherein the first metal film has sides, and the second metal film is thicker than the first metal film other than the silver or silver alloy film on the sides of the first metal film.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor element of Claim 2, wherein a nickel film is disposed in a partial area between the silver or silver alloy constituting the first metal film and the nitride semiconductor layer.

27. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor element according to Claim 2, wherein the first metal film has sides, and wherein the second metal film is thicker than the first metal film other than the silver or silver alloy film on the sides of the first metal film.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (New) The semiconductor element according to Claim 1, wherein the silver film constituting the first metal film is formed so that it becomes smaller in size away from the side in contact with the p-type semiconductor layer.

30. (New) The semiconductor element according to Claim 2, wherein the silver film constituting the first metal film is formed so that it becomes smaller in size away from the side in contact with the p-type semiconductor layer.